



RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Municipal Police Training Academy

Community College of Rhode Island — Flanagan Campus

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Colonel James M. Manni
Superintendent, Rhode Island State Police
Director, Department of Public Safety

Lieutenant Christopher J. Zarrella
Executive Director
Municipal Police Training Academy

Police Officers Commission on Standards & Training Special Meeting Minutes

March 31 2022

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Chief Mello called to order the regular meeting of the Police Officers Commission on Standards & Training (POST) at 10:00 a.m. on **May 31, 2022 at the Cranston Police Department.**

Chief Mello took a roll call. The following POST members were present at the zoom meeting: Chief Mello, Colonel Michael Winquist, and Maria Deaton. A quorum has been met. Absent are Colonel Clements and Mr. Brown. Also present were Lieutenant Christopher Zarrella, Donna Lavalley, Kate Sabatoni, Adam Sholes, Chief Syd Wordell, Paul Dutra, Chief Scott Raynes, Chief William Kewer, Chief Brian Sullivan, Sgt. Ken Dolan-Pawtucket PD and Officer Jeremy Smith-Warwick PD.

2. Review of Lateral Applications:

Chief Mello stated that this request is for the transfer of Officer Stewart Braman to Little Compton PD from Middletown PD. He has reviewed the documentation and it is complete and in order with the exception of the Psychological. Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve this lateral application contingent upon a passing score on the Psychological Examination and Ms. Deaton seconded the motion. With all in favor, 3-0, motion carries.

The next application from Lincoln PD is for Officer Jonathan Karraz coming from Central Falls PD to Lincoln PD. Chief Mello stated he has reviewed this documentation as well and all is complete and in order and he recommends approval. Chief Sullivan stated he received a verbal on the psychological exam. Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve the lateral application contingent upon the final written Psychological Report and Ms. Deaton seconded the motion. With all in favor, 3-0, motion carries.

The next application from Lincoln PD is for Officer Victoria Platt coming from Central Falls PD to Lincoln PD. Chief Mello stated he has reviewed this documentation as well and all is complete and in order and he recommends approval. Chief Sullivan stated that he received a verbal on the psychological exam. Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve the lateral application contingent upon the final written Psychological Report and Ms. Deaton seconded the motion. With all in favor, 3-0, motion carries.

Mr. Brown has now joined the meeting.

The next application from Lincoln PD for Officer Matthew Jenkins coming from Central Falls PD to Lincoln PD. Chief Mello stated he has reviewed this documentation as well and all is complete and in order and he recommends approval. Chief Sullivan stated that he received a verbal on the psychological exam. Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve the lateral application contingent upon the final written Psychological Report and Ms. Deaton seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

The next application from Warwick PD for Officer Cameron Schneck coming from South Kingstown PD to Warwick PD. Chief Mello stated he has reviewed this documentation and all is complete and in order with the exception of the medical examination and recommends approval. Officer Jeremy Smith stated that the medical exam is scheduled for tomorrow. Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve this lateral application contingent upon the receipt of a currently dated medical examination and Ms. Deaton seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

The next application from Warwick PD for Officer Patrick Holmes coming from East Providence PD to Warwick PD. Chief Mello stated he has reviewed this documentation and all is in order with the exception of the medical examination and recommends approval. Officer Jeremy Smith stated that the medical exam is scheduled for tomorrow. Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve the lateral application contingent upon the receipt of a currently dated medical examination and Ms. Deaton seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

The next application from Warwick PD for Officer Michael Rosa coming from East Providence PD to Warwick PD. Chief Mello stated he has reviewed this documentation and all is in order with the exception of the medical examination and recommends approval. Officer Jeremy Smith stated that the medical exam is scheduled for tomorrow. Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve the lateral application contingent upon the receipt of a currently dated medical examination and Mr. Brown seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

3. Discussion regarding letter from Chief Kewer, Middletown PD, regarding Officer George Ponte

Chief Kewer explained that he has an officer, George Ponte, who left his department and would like to come back. He was a Middletown officer for 5 years before leaving for two years for the F.B.I. He left the F.B.I. last week and would like to be re-employed by Middletown PD. Chief Kewer is asking for a re-instatement from the POST. He is looking for guidance as to how to proceed to get his certification back. (Mr. Brown is recusing himself from this agenda item.) Chief Mello suggested at a minimum he would have to undergo some retraining like Breathalyzer, etc. He feels it would be up to the department to do their due diligence in getting him up to speed on training. Chief Kewer replied that he will look at his trainings and will get him up to date. Mr. Scholes added that he feels this falls under the Re-Certification Policy and should go through the same procedure as a lateral. Chief Mello advised Chief Kewer to continue with the Lateral process and when it's complete to contact him so he can make arrangements to review as he was given incorrect information. Colonel Winquist made a motion to move this item to a pending Lateral application; Ms. Deaton seconded the motion. With all in favor, 3-0, motion carries.

4. Discussion regarding letter from Chief Goncalves, Pawtucket PD, regarding Officer Matthew mello.

Chief Mello stated that this is a similar situation as above. Sergeant Ken Dolan added that he was with the Pawtucket PD for five years and left for the F.B.I. He would now like to come back. A full lateral package has been completed and the only outstanding item is waiting on the drug screening to come

back. Sgt. Dolan added that he received a verbal on the Psychological. Chief Mello stated that this will be treated as a lateral and recommends approval. Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve the lateral application contingent upon the negative drug screen report and final Psychological Report; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries. Chief Mello added that any training certifications are the responsibility of the Pawtucket PD.

5. Application of Chandler Psychological Services to provide pre-employment testing for review, discussion and/or vote

Chief Mello explained that Lieutenant Zarrella interviewed a few current agencies who are using Chandler Psychological Services and all of them submitted favorable feedback. Chief Mello had one of his Detectives perform background checks on the three doctor's licenses and all the findings were negative. Mr. Brown asked if they were approving the three doctors and what if they switched to another company? Chief Mello suggested making it a condition of approval as long as the doctors remain under this group. Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve the three licenses doctors (Dr. Paul Girling, Dr. Robert Ciottone, Dr. John Madonna) to provide pre-employment Psychological Testing to recruits with Chandler Psychological Services; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

6. COVID 19 Vaccine Mandate-Review, discussion and/or vote

Chief Mello stated that at the last meeting, the POST issued a mandate that vaccinations would be required for the next Academy Class. He has received a number of calls regarding the timing and questions regarding exemptions for medical and religious reasons. He realizes that the COVID situation has changed in a positive direction right now and asked the members if they want to revise the mandate. Lieutenant Zarrella gave his opinion as far as the Academy view. He stated he was not there to debate the issue but wanted to make a few points such as the recruit classes have been very large and they are in very close quarters. Training, to be most effective, must be in person. He has noted first hand that the vaccinated recruits do get COVID; however, they recuperate much quicker and get right back in the game. He cautions that unvaccinated recruits take longer to bounce back and that can be a detrimental effect on the recruit. The Academy still tests twice a week and follows the state mandates regarding quarantine times. Out of the original 62 recruits, 6 are not vaccinated. To date, the 5 day quarantine period has not been counted towards their sick days.

Chief Mello suggests that the POST consider exemptions at the very least. Mr. Brown added that the concern is that the Academy needs to push forward with the classes and get these recruits out to the communities who rely on them to finish and he feels the mandate will help. The tricky part is we don't know what's ahead, even though we are in a positive direction now. The first obligation is safety and the 2nd is guaranteeing we are turning out police officers. Ultimately, we must give the Lieutenant candidates that are healthy and remain healthy. Colonel Winquist asked if a religious exemption be handled through the departments due to legality issues. Adam Scholes responded that the RISP added the mandate as part of their Conditional Officer of Employment. It was modeled after the Department of Health and has the medical exemption explanation with the CDC. He feels you should stick with the medical exemption and leave out the religious exemption. He will send a draft. Chief Mello stated that the Proof of vaccination status would be required with the other documents required as part of the application package. Lieutenant Zarrella stated we would add this as part of the checklist. Chief Kewer asked what is the definition of vaccination? Mr. Scholes responded the CDC standards stated fully vaccinated status is two vaccinations and a booster.

Mr. Brown made a motion to review the previous policy regarding COVID vaccination mandate to include the provisions pursuant to the COVID vaccination:

- If not vaccinated, a recruit candidate must get the original, second, and/or booster as soon as it is available
- The Academy will allow for a medical exemption under the CDC guidelines.

- A recruit candidate must be fully vaccinated by DCD requirements.

Ms. Deaton seconded the motion. With all in favor, m 4-0, motion carries.

7. 3-year Certification/Re-Certification of Academy Instructors

- Officer David Boardman-Warwick PD – Patrol Operations/Motor Vehicle Stops
- Sgt. Michael Marcello-Warren PD – Firearms Instructor
- Trp. James Thomas-RISP-Hazardous Material

Lieutenant Zarrella approved all above instructors as top notch. Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve the Certifications/Re-Certification; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

8. Approval of Firearms Qualifications Courses:

- Burrillville Police Department
- Charlestown Police Department
- Narragansett Police Department
- North Smithfield Police Department

Lieutenant Zarrella stated that the above courses were approved by our Firearms Cadre. Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve the above courses; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. All in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

9. Update on current Class 2022-I

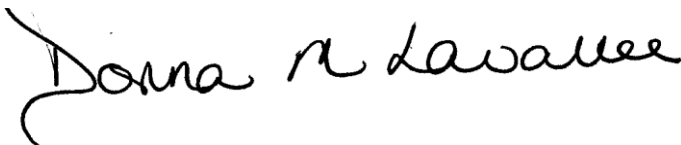
Lt. Zarrella spoke on the current class-they are doing well. There were nine Use of Force failures but the expectation from the cadre is that the majority are expected to pass. The recruits raised over \$24,000 for the Special Olympics.

Chief Mello added that today is the Lieutenant's last day as he will be leaving this weekend for the F.B.I. Academy. Lieutenant Zarrella stated Sgt. Lagor will be stepping in and his contact information can always be gotten through Donna.

10. Adjournment

Colonel Winquist made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 am; Chief Mello seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna M. Lavalley
Administrative Assistant